WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for communicating status of a plurality of plain old telephone system (POTS) telephones over a network to an inquiring computer, the system comprising:

a telephone status monitor connected so as to monitor a telephone status of the plurality of POTS telephones; and

a telephone status file connected to the telephone status monitor for receiving the telephone status of the plurality of POTS telephones, the telephone status file being accessible by the inquiring computer via the network.

2. The system for communicating status over a network of claim 1, wherein the telephone status comprises on-hook and off-hook condition of the telephone.

3. The system for communicating status over a network of claim 1, wherein the telephone status comprises the status of consumer options for telephone service.

4. The system for communicating status over a network of claim 1, the system further comprising:

a calling party telephone; and

logic enabling the calling party telephone to place a telephone call to one of the plurality of POTS telephones when that one of the plurality of POTS telephones is in an on-hook status.

5. The system for communicating status over a network of claim 1, the system further comprising:

a voice mail converter connected to receive an alpha numeric message via the network and convert the alpha numeric message into a voice mail message;

the converter further connected so as to allow a called party to access the voice mail message; and

whereby the inquiring computer can create an alphanumeric message to be sent to the voice mail converter over the network for subsequent conversion into voice mail by the voice mail converter.

6. The system for providing telephone status of claim **5**, wherein system further comprises:

a called party processor connected to the network, wherein the voice mail converter is connected to receive the alpha numeric message from the network via the called party processor.

7. A process for a calling party to determine telephone status of a called party telephone over a network, the process comprising:

inputting a telephone number corresponding to the called party's plain old telephone system (POTS) telephone to a telephone status monitor over the network via a calling party processor; and

accessing a called party telephone status file over the network, wherein status of the called party's POTS telephone is made available via the called party telephone status file by the telephone status monitor.

8. The process for a calling party to determine telephone status of claim **7**, the process further comprising:

the calling party processor dialing the telephone number of the called party's POTS telephone when an on-hook status is detected; and

establishing a telephone call between the calling party and the called party via a telephone connected to the calling party processor.

9. The process for a calling party to determine telephone status of claim 7, the process further comprising:

creating an alpha numeric message; and

sending the alpha numeric message over the network to a voice mail converter for conversion into a voice mail message, wherein the voice mail message is accessible for retrieval by the called party.

10. The process for a calling party to determine telephone status of claim 9, wherein the alpha numeric message is received at the voice mail converter via a called party processor connected between the network and the voice mail converter.

11. A process for determining telephone status comprising:

accessing a telephone status file over a network; and

monitoring the status of a plurality of plain old telephone system (POTS) telephones and providing that telephone status to the telephone status file.

12. The process for determining telephone status of claim 11, wherein the monitoring of telephone status is accomplished by a telephone status monitor monitoring the on-hook and off-hook status of a plurality of telephones.

13. The process for determining telephone status of claim 12, wherein the telephone status monitor periodically updates the status of telephones being monitored.

14. The process for determining telephone status of claim **11**, wherein the accessing a telephone status over a network comprises:

receiving a number to be called, input by a calling party; and

reviewing the telephone status of the number to be called in the telephone status file.

15. The process for determining telephone status of claim **14**, the process further comprising:

periodically updating the telephone status file with the status of telephones being monitored.

16. The process for determining telephone status of claim **15**, the process further comprising:

notifying a calling party by beeper that a called party telephone is in an on-hook condition.

17. A system for communicating over a network, the system comprising:

a voice mail converter connected to receive an alpha numeric message via the network and convert the alpha numeric message into a voice mail message;

the converter further connected so as to allow a called party to access the voice mail message; and

whereby a message creation device creates an alphanumeric message to be sent to the voice mail converter over the network for subsequent conversion into voice mail by the voice mail converter.

18. The system for communicating over a network of claim 17, wherein the network is a wireless network and the message creation device comprises a wireless communication device.

19. The system for communicating over a network of claim 18, wherein the creation device comprises a telephone.

20. The system for communicating over a network of claim 18, wherein the creation device comprises a computer.

21. The system for communicating over a network of claim 17, wherein the network is a wireless network and the called party accesses the voice mail message using a wireless communication device.

22. The system for communicating over a network of claim 21, wherein the wireless communication device comprises a telephone.

23. The system for communicating over a network of claim 21, wherein the wireless communication device comprises a computer.

24. The system for communicating over a network of claim 21, wherein the wireless communication device comprises a personal digital assistant having voice capability.

25. The system for communicating over a network of claim 17, wherein the creation device comprises a telephone.

26. The system for communicating over a network of claim **17**, wherein the creation device comprises a computer.

27. The system for communicating over a network of claim **17**, wherein the called party accesses the voice mail message using a telephone.

28. The system for communicating over a network of claim **17**, wherein the called party accesses the voice mail message using a computer.

29. The system for communicating over a network of claim **17**, wherein the called party accesses the voice mail message using a personal digital assistant having voice capability.

30. A system for providing status of a plurality of telephones over a network to an inquiring computer, the system comprising:

a telephone status monitor connected so as to monitor a telephone status of the plurality of telephones; and

a telephone status file connected to the telephone status monitor for receiving the telephone status of the plurality of telephones, the telephone status file being accessible by the inquiring computer via the network;

wherein the telephone status is a consumer option selected from the group consisting of: number of rings to voicemail and call waiting.

31. A system for providing telephone status over a network to a calling party computer connected to that network, the system comprising:

a telephone status monitor connected so as to monitor a telephone status of a telephone;

a telephone status file connected to the telephone status monitor for receiving the telephone status of the telephone, the telephone status file being accessible by the calling computer via the network; and

a voice mail converter connected to receive an alpha numeric message via the network and convert the alpha numeric message into a voice mail message; and

the converter being further connected so as to allow a called party to access the voice mail message;

whereby the calling party computer can create an alphanumeric message to be sent to the voice mail converter via the network for subsequent conversion into voice mail by the voice mail converter.

32. The system for providing telephone status of claim 31, wherein system further comprises:

a called party processor connected to the network, wherein the voice mail converter is connected to receive the alpha numeric message from the network via the called party processor.

33. A process for a calling party to determine telephone status of a called party telephone over a network, the process comprising:

inputting a called party's telephone number to a telephone status monitor over the network via a calling party processor;

accessing a called party telephone status file over the network, wherein status of the called party telephone is made available via the called party status file by the telephone status monitor;

creating an alpha numeric message; and

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sending the alpha numeric message over the network to a voice mail converter for conversion into a voice mail message, wherein the voice mail message is accessible for retrieval by the called party.

34. The process for a calling party to determine telephone status of claim 33, wherein the alpha numeric message is received at the voice mail converter via a called party processor connected between the network and the voice mail converter.

35. A process for determining telephone status, the process comprising:

accessing a telephone status file over a network, the telephone status file representing telephone status of one or more telephones that are being monitored;

reviewing periodic updates to the telephone status file with respect to a called party telephone selected from the one or more telephones monitored for the telephone status file; and

notifying a calling party by beeper that the called party telephone is in an on-hook condition.

36. A system for communicating thermal status via one or more telephones over a network to an inquiring computer, the system comprising:

a telephone status monitor connected so as to monitor a telephone status of the one or more telephones; and

a telephone status file connected to the telephone status monitor for receiving the telephone status of the one or more telephones, the telephone status file being accessible by the inquiring computer via the network;

wherein the telephone status comprises a temperature condition of a thermal system reporting to the telephone.

37. The system for communicating thermal status of claim **36**, wherein the thermal system reporting a temperature condition is selected from the group consisting of: a household heating system, a household cooling system, a household central air system, a commercial heating-ventilation-air-conditioning system, a refrigerator, and a freezer.

38. A process for a calling party to determine thermal status via a called party telephone over a network, the process comprising:

inputting a telephone number corresponding to the called party's telephone to a telephone status monitor over the network via a calling party processor; and

accessing a called party telephone status file over the network, wherein telephone status of the called party's telephone is made available via the called party telephone status file by the telephone status monitor;

wherein the telephone status comprises a temperature condition of a thermal system reporting to the telephone.

39. The process for a calling party to determine thermal status of claim **38**, wherein the thermal system reporting a temperature condition is selected from the group consisting of: a household heating system, a household cooling system, a household central air system, a commercial heating-ventilation-air-conditioning system, a refrigerator, and a freezer.

40. A process for determining temperature status via telephone, the process comprising:

accessing a telephone status file over a network; and

monitoring the temperature status corresponding to a plurality of telephones and providing that temperature status to the telephone status file.

41. The process for determining temperature status via telephone of claim **40**, wherein the temperature status corresponding to each of the plurality of telephones comprises a temperature condition reported by a thermal system,

wherein the thermal system is selected from the group consisting of: a household heating system, a household cooling system, a household central air system, a commercial heating-ventilation-air-conditioning system, a refrigerator, and a freezer.

42. A system for communicating status of a plurality of telephones over a network to a videophone, the system comprising:

a telephone status monitor connected so as to monitor a telephone status of the plurality of telephones; and

a telephone status file connected to the telephone status monitor for receiving the telephone status of the plurality of telephones, the telephone status file being accessible by the videophone via the network.

43. A process for a calling party to determine telephone status of a called party telephone over a network, the process comprising:

inputting a telephone number corresponding to the called party's telephone to a telephone status monitor over the network via a videophone; and

accessing a called party telephone status file with the videophone over the network, wherein status of the called party's telephone is made available via the called party telephone status file by the telephone status monitor.

44. A process for determining telephone status comprising:

accessing a telephone status file over a network using a videophone; and

monitoring the status of a plurality of telephones and providing that telephone
status to the telephone status file for viewing via the videophone.

45. A system for communicating status of a plurality of wireless
telecommunication devices over a network to an inquiring computer, the system
comprising:

a telephone status monitor connected so as to monitor a telephone status of the
plurality of wireless telecommunication devices; and

a telephone status file connected to the telephone status monitor for receiving the
telephone status of the plurality of wireless telecommunication devices, the telephone
status file being accessible by the inquiring computer via the network.

46. The system for communicating status over a network of claim **45**, the system
further comprising:

a voice mail converter connected to receive an alpha numeric message via the
network and convert the alpha numeric message into a voice mail message;

the converter further connected so as to allow a called party to access the voice
mail message via one or more of the plurality of wireless telecommunication devices; and

whereby the inquiring computer can create an alphanumeric message to be sent to
the voice mail converter via the network for subsequent conversion into voice mail by the
voice mail converter.

47. A process for a calling party to determine device status of a called party
wireless telecommunication device over a network, the process comprising:

inputting a telephone number corresponding to the called party's wireless telecommunication device to a device status monitor over the network via a calling party processor; and

accessing a called party device status file over a network, wherein status of the called party's wireless telecommunication devices is made available via the called party device status file by the device status monitor.

48. The process for a calling party to determine device status of claim 47, the process further comprising:

creating an alpha numeric message; and

sending the alpha numeric message over the network to a voice mail converter for conversion into a voice mail message, wherein the voice mail message is accessible for retrieval by the called party via the called party's wireless telecommunication device.

49. The process for a calling party to determine device status of claim 47, the process further comprising:

notifying the calling party by beeper that the called party's wireless telecommunication device is in an on-hook condition.

50. A process for determining wireless telecommunication device status comprising:

accessing a device status file over a network; and

monitoring the status of a plurality of wireless telecommunication devices and providing that device status to the device status file.

51. The process for determining wireless telecommunication device status of claim **50**, the process further comprising:

notifying a calling party by beeper that a called party wireless telecommunication device is in an on-hook condition.